of the Tribal Gadchiroli District of Maharashtra;

(b) whether it is a fact that these remote tribal areas in deep forests do not get the required items of foodgrains which leads the Naxalities to exploit the sentiments of these tribals; and

(c) what steps are being taken by Government to see that proper supply of foodgrains through the Public Distribution System is maintained in this area ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED) : (a) Government of Maharashtra has reported that there are 80 Fair Price Shops in Sironcha and 105 in Aheri Talukas of Gadchiroli District.

(b) and (c) Maharashtra Government has reported that under Special Action Plan, new Fair Price Shops have been opened in remote and inaccessible areas. To ensure regular supply of foodgrains, the scheme of doorstep delivery of foodgrains to fair price shops has been introduced in these tribal areas. Financial assistance is also being given by the State Government to needy fair price shopkeepers under Nucleus Budget Scheme.

Consumer Tribunal Benches in the Cities of Maharashtra

5249. DR. SHRIKANT RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR : Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government would consider setting up of the benches of the State Consumer Tribunal/Forum of Maharashtra in the cities of Nagpur, Pune and Aurangabad;

(b) whether Government consider that this would reduce the pendency of the cases;

(c) if so, by when this will be done; and

(d) if not, what action Government propose to take to reduce the pendency of cases ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED) : (a) There is no provision for setting up of benches either of the State Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission or of the District Consumer Disputes Redressal Forums under the Consumer Protection Act, 1986.

(b) to (d) The Act empowers the State Governments to set up additional District Forum(s) if the State Government so desires, keeping in view increases in the workload in the District Forum.

Inclusion of new items in the list of Essential Commodities

5250. DR. SHRIKANT RAMACHANDRA JICHKAR : Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) what is the latest list of essential commodities, as on 1st February, 1994;

(b) whether consumer fora and organisations have been demanding to include many more items in the list of essential commodities;

(c) if so, what steps are being taken to make such inclusion; and

(d) if not, what are the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS & PUBLIC DISTRI-